Medium of Instruction

Reg. No. B3092[

# HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: K. G. MASHRUWALA

VOL. XII. No. 12 AHMEDABAD — SUNDAY, MAY 23, 1948 TWO ANNAS

## RAJAJI

The appointment of Shri Chakravarti Rajgopalachari as the next Governor-General of the Indian Union is hardly a matter of surprise, though it has rightly been regarded a matter of great satisfaction by the whole of India, including Pakistan. His clear intellect, freedom from narrow-mindedness in any shape, his sympathy for the depressed and the oppressed and his determination to foster friendliness among all communities, classes and both the Dominions, no less than his political sagacity will be a great strength to the Government of India under the new Constitution. As Governor-General of India he literally justifies the name of Chakravarti Rajaji. May God grant him the energy and strength to carry India to her goal!

Bombay, 14-5-'48 K. G. MASHRUWALA

## VINOBA'S TOUR IN DELHI AND THE EAST PUNJAB

[The following account of Shri Vinoba's tour in Delhi and the East Punjab has been condensed from the original account sent in Marathi by D. D. who is one of his companions. —*Ed.*]

Shri Vinoba and his company reached Delhi on the 30th March, 1948 and toured through Delhi and the East Punjab visiting several refugee camps, institutions and a few Muslim villages and colonies. His public utterances have already been reported in the *Harijan* from time to time. In this account I give a few additional notes.

There are several refugee camps in Delhi. Of these the party visited those known as Kalika, Savitri Nagar, Purana Qila, Bela Road, and Tis Hajari camps on 31st March. The people in the first two camps are fed at Government expense. There are about 50 spinning wheels in the Kalika camp. But that number is very meagre and there is no satisfactory supply of ginned or unginned cotton. The camp is inhabited by about two thousand people. In the Savitri Nagar camp a few industries like *ghani*, gardening, baking etc. are carried on on co-operative lines. It is a camp of five hundred souls. The rest of the three camps are more or less self-supporting except that free lodging is provided by the Government. The refugees in these camps are engaged in some occupation or another. Of these, the Tis Hajari camp consists of people who had occupied the mosques of Delhi and have been made to shift to this camp. Most of them are shopkeepers and they have opened their shops in various parts of Delhi.

On 1st April the party visited the Kingsway Camp near the Harijan Colony. It is the largest camp of Delhi with 30,000 inhabitants. People complained of insufficiency of water and lights, of serpents, bad flour, insufficiency of milk or impure milk, extreme heat in the tents and other inconveniences. There is a great amount of dissatisfaction amongst the people and their main demand is that they should be quickly supplied with houses. Much time was taken up in hearing complaints and still there were several who felt that they had not been heard. Shri Vinoba consoled them by saying that he had gone to them in the spirit of service to God, that he had understood the nature of their grievances and sympathized with them. He knew that they wanted to say some more things, but he would tell them that these things were more easily understood through the heart than through ears.

I should have said that both on the previous day and on this day, Shri Vinoba had paid a visit to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and had on the second day at his request recited before him Shri Shankaracharya's *Sadhan Panchaka* and a portion of the *Bhagawad Gita* with their meaning. He also had discussion with Dr. Sushila Nayyar about abducted women in Patiala, Bahawalpur etc. It was related that some women were unwilling to return because they had married the abductors. Some said that they had lost their religion and chastity and would rather not lose their country also. These are some of the problems of this work.

On 2nd April Shrimati Rameshwari Nehru took the party on a visit to a basic school conducted by the Relief Ministry on the Kingsway. It is a school of about 150 children of ages between three and ten years. There is also a women's centre with some orphans in Sabji Mandi. Nursing and a dispensary are the main activities of that centre. Most of the women and orphans are of the abducted class. Some knitting and sewing is carried on at the centre. There is also a similar industrial centre at Karol Baug, attended by about 400 to 500 women. They take training for about two hours each and return home. Subji mandi, Karol Baug and Paharganj were all Muslim localities originally, but at present are peopled by refugees from the Punjab. About five lacs of refugees had come to Delhi. Of these nearly four lacs and a half have occupied these three localities. About 50,000 are in tents. This is over and above those who have been accommodated by personal friends. It is the women with families who have settled down in houses that take the industrial

training. A shop of articles prepared by these women has been opened at Connaught Circus, New Delhi.

There was a meeting of the Delhi Congress Central Relief Committee in the afternoon. Shri Vinoba emphasized two points: (1) It was possible to carry on spinning and ancillary processes, grinding of flour, sanitation work etc. in a satisfactory manner in a camp like the Kalika. But it could be so done only if the workers themselves took part in those activities, and (2) All the produce of *ghanis*, *chakkis*, etc. should first be utilized in the camp itself and the surplus only should be sold in the market. It was necessary that priority should be given to such industries which provided the prime daily needs of the camp, even if in monetary reckoning, their production appeared more costly. It was necessary that the camps should be self-sufficient in the matter of their primary needs.

Shri Vinoba participated in a meeting of the Peace Committee of Delhi which met that evening. It was brought to his notice that the atmosphere was deteriorating since Gandhiji's death and some of the newspapers were contributing towards such deterioration. While on the one hand the Hindu refugees were not yet rehabilitated, the Muslim who had migrated to Pakistan had begun to return to India. As the discussion was incomplete, the meeting was adjourned to the 4th.

On the 3rd, the party visited the camps at Panipat, Karnal, etc. which are at a distance of about 50 miles from Delhi. Instead of moving round the camp in a single group, the party divided itself into small batches and each went round a different section of the camp. The conditions of life in the camp were very hard indeed. The tents were not more than three feet in height. They became too hot during the day and were incapable of being used for sleeping at night. Owing to the insufficiency of larger tents these one-man tents of the Military Department had been brought into use. People are shifted into the larger tents as soon as those who lived in them were accommodated elsewhere.

Shri Vinoba generally put five questions to the refugee he met. What were his difficulties? Was he prepared to grind flour? Was he prepared to spin, weave etc.? Would he be in a position to construct a house himself, if land and building materials were provided to him? The answer to the first question was generally of the same nature. To the other four questions, the answer was that they would do whatever work they were given, but they belonged to the class of shop-keepers, merchants, landholders, moneylenders etc. and so they would prefer such occupations to those suggested by Shri Vinoba, and would like to be nearer a town than a village. Shri Vinoba has been feeling more and more keenly that the system of providing free rations should be firmly put an end to at least gradually, if not at once.

The 4th of April was occupied partly in attending to the call of the Rehabilitation Commissioner of Delhi and the Chairman of the Rehabilitation Board and partly in attending the adjourned meeting of the Delhi Peace Committee.

On the 5th the party saw the Rohtak Camp in the East Punjab. A licence is required to get admission into this camp, and so the party found about two to three hundred people lying outside the camp in the open without tents or rations. The licence system has been imposed to prevent the overcrowding of the camp. The refugees of this camp are being settled on lands in the neighbouring villages. About five to six thousand people have been so settled already. But some of these have been returning to the camp because they feel that the land assigned to them is inferior to that of the West Punjab which they had cultivated. The system of giving free rations is also a temptation for returning. Government has been trying to meet both the difficulties.

The Muslims of the Budia *Jaghir* near Ambala had abandoned the idea of migrating to Pakistan upon the advice of Gandhiji. The Sikh President of the *Jaghir* has been rendering them great help. But the Muslims complained that some of the officers adopted a policy calculated to compel them to migrate. They were also afraid that if the military protection was removed their lives would be in danger.

On 6th April the party visited the Gurgaon Camp. A novel feature of this camp was that we saw one or two *chakkis* working in the camp. The Deputy Commissioner told the party in an apologetic tone that this work had to be taken from the people because there was not a sufficient number of flour mills near about. Shri Vinoba told him that he would rather wish more such *chakkis* were introduced. He was agreeably surprised that in the meeting which was held at this place a written application was presented on behalf of the women that they should be provided with a hundred *chakkis* and as many *charkhas*.

At Ghaseda, a village about 20 miles from Gurgaon, a meeting of the local Meos had been organized. The Meos are a strong and sturdy people, industrious but poor and illiterate. The district was formerly inhabited by about four lacs of these people. About a lac and a half only are now believed to be still there. The rest have either migrated to Pakistan or dispersed in the surrounding districts. Refugees from the West Punjab have taken possession of their lands. The Meos have been returning now and they demand possession of their lands. This has given rise to a difficult problem.

From Ghaseda the party went to Bakhtawarpur where a lying-in-hospital and a dispensary are conducted on behalf of the Kasturba Memorial Trust.

On the 7th April the party in company with Thakkarbapa visited the Harijan Colony at Delhi and had a happy time with the students there. Shri Vinoba also received a visit from the representatives of the Jamiat-ul-Ulema.

On 8th April the party visited the Kurukshetra Camp in company with Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. There are about 1,86,000 refugees in this camp. In fact the camp is divided into four towns. The Government has to spend about two lakhs of rupees daily for

rationing this camp. The main complaint of the people was that the ration was insufficient. In other respects the camp appeared to be far better managed than other camps. Shri Vinoba emphasized the necessity of putting an end to the free ration system as quickly as possible. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru gave public expression to this point in a speech which he made there and declared that those who were willing to work would get a priority in the rehabilitation scheme.

The party proceeded to Ambala from this place. On the way they saw the Gita Mandir, which is erected on the spot where Shri Krishna is believed to have given the message of the *Gita* to Arjuna. Shri Vinoba devoutly recited portions of the *Gita* in the temple. But before the recitation was complete he was so overpowered with emotion that his voice got choked and tears began to flow down his cheeks and he could not proceed further. After spending about twenty minutes in the *Mandir*, the party proceeded to Ambala. Dr. Gopichand Bhargava, the Prime Minister of the East Punjab explained his rehabilitation plans and discussed the problems with Shri Vinoba. As the new capital of the East Punjab was to be near about Ambala, he hoped that many people would find employment in the construction of the capital. Shri Vinoba laid stress on the organization of village industries amongst these people.

On the 9th April the party visited about three or four camps near Ambala and saw also the *katcha* model houses erected there. A striking feature of these camps was their congregational prayers and drill.

The 10th of April was devoted to taking stock of what they had seen and heard. Shri Shankarrao Deo, Shri Dhotre, Shri Jajuji, Sri Krishnadas Gandhi, Shri Jethalal Govindji and others participated in the discussion. The following are the main points which were made out in the discussion:

1. Although the party had seen only the camps of Delhi and the East Punjab, it was obvious that the question was not confined to these parts only. There were refugees in other provinces of India also and there were also places in Sind and East Bengal which required their attention. It was necessary therefore to have a central organization for all India to help and guide the refugees of all these places. For this purpose it was necessary that the Congress Central Relief Committee should be reorganized and a very able person should be appointed as the Chief Organizer of that Committee.

2. The above Committee would look to the problems of the refugees. But that would not end matters. It was necessary to give special attention to the task of removing communal hatred and to tackle the problems of the Muslims living in the Indian Union as well as those returning from Pakistan. These were independent matters and required separate study and solution.

3. Although the rehabilitation of the refugees was a task which Government alone could adequately handle, still it was possible to take up a camp and do solid work there in a non-official manner. It was necessary to select a centre and organize spinning, grinding and other village industries and improve its sanitary conditions by working amongst the refugees and creating a spirit of self-help and industry in them. A Meo centre in the Gurgaon district was considered more appropriate for this purpose as both the problems mentioned in items 1 and 2 would be faced there.

4. The question of widows and girls also required independent handling. It was necessary to take that work also in hand with the help of the Hindustani Talimi Sangh and the Kasturba Memorial Trust.

In the afternoon the representatives of the Jamiat-ul-Ulema saw Shri Vinoba again and apprised him of the disturbances which had taken place in the Dholpur State on 31st March and 1st April. Shri Vinoba was taken also to the Birla House at New Delhi and shown the room where Bapu resided last and the place where he was shot. The Birlas have placed a slab on the spot where Bapu received his injuries with the inscription of the words *He Rama* upon it. The place is not open to the public at present. Shri Vinoba also saw the Bhangi Colony which were Bapu's headquarters during his previous visits.

On the 11th the party visited the *Urus* of Bibi Nur and the shrine of Khwaja Kutubuddin at Mehrauli. It will be remembered that one of the conditions imposed by Gandhiji for breaking his last fast at Delhi was that the annual festival of the shrine should take place without disturbance. The shrine had been considerably injured during the disturbances and the work of repairs is still proceeding.

On 12th April the party visited Dr. Zakir Hussain's Jamia Milia Islamia and a basic school of the refugees in the adjoining village conducted under the auspices of the Jamia. The Jamia had suffered a loss of about two to three lakhs in the shape of stock of books which were burnt by fire. Adjourned discussions of the 10th were resumed in the afternoon. It was decided that Shri Jajuji should undertake the erection of one hundred model houses with the help of the Congress Relief Committee of Delhi at a cost of about one lakh of rupees. Shri Vinoba also received a visit from Shrimati Mridulabehn and an officer looking to the problem of the Meos in the Gurgaon district.

D. D.

## TO SUBSCRIBERS OF THE 'INDIAN OPINION'

Old files of the *Indian Opinion* of the period during which it was being conducted by Gandhiji contain valuable material for his biography. These are, however, not easily obtainable. We would, therefore, request the subscribers to the *Indian Opinion* to help us in getting them. All files sent to us will be paid for. All who can send us the files may please address their correspondence to Jivanji D. Desai, Manager, Navajivan Karyalaya Post Box 105, Ahmedabad, India.

J. DESAI

**HARIJAN**

**May 23 1948**

## MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION

According to the Associated Press of India report the Committee on the medium of instruction at the university stage which met at New Delhi in the first week of May under the chairmanship of Dr. Tarachand has passed, among others, the following resolutions:

(1) that there should be a five-year period of transition, during which English would continue to be the medium of instruction and examination in the universities, and that this period should be utilized to prepare for the introduction of the regional or the State language of the area concerned;

(2) that a test in the federal or national language of India should be obligatory for all students, but the result of the test should have no effect on the career of the pupil;

(3) that the process of replacement of English by the regional languages should be gradual and by stages and that the English language should be a compulsory subject in all universities;

(4) that a board of philologists and scientists should be appointed to prepare a common scientific terminology for all Indian languages, making use of international terms as far as possible and in consultation with provinces and universities. The Board should be directed to complete its work within five years;

(5) that the Central Government should examine the question of allowing extra-territorial jurisdiction to the various universities in order to help in the solution of the language problems of linguistic minorities within a region;

(6) That the script eventually adopted by the Constituent Assembly should be accepted by all the universities — a minority holding that the Roman script should in any case be an additional script for federal as well as other Indian languages.

I make a brief comment on these items.

Having regard to the various hurdles that have to be crossed before English could be displaced, I think that the demand for a five years' period of grace for effecting the transition is fair. But the period should be looked upon and adhered to strictly as a pledge. We all know that a three days' period of grace is allowed on negotiable instruments. But it is expressly understood that three means three and the number allowed cannot be exceeded.

This reminds me of the day on which I first saw and heard Gandhiji in 1917 at a public meeting in Bombay. The meeting called upon the Government of India to put an end to the system of indentured labour then in vogue by a particular date. Gandhiji warned both the Government of India and the audience to take him seriously in regard to the date. The date was not meant as a mere bluff. If the date passed off before the Government put an end to the system, he would not rest until the grievance was removed. And be it noted, the system was put an end to as demanded.

Let us also remember another occasion when a date was fixed and strictly adhered to. At the 1928 session of the Congress, a period of one year's grace was allowed to the British Government for granting Dominion Status to India. If Government allowed the period to lapse the Congress creed was to be altered from one of Independence to that of Complete Independence. The period came to an end on the midnight of 31st December 1929, and along with the announcement of the birth of the year 1930 came also the announcement of the change in the Congress creed. The various movements which followed the announcement for the achievement of that creed are well known.

In the same way I hope the Government of India and the various universities will regard the five years' period as a solemn promise to the people of India that when schools and colleges reopen after the summer vacation of 1953, every institution will give the highest education available in the country in the regional or State language of the institution. (I assume that the meaning of the latter phrase is that assigned to it in the Draft Constitution of India. That is to say, if a State or member of the Indian Union is a single-language region, the medium of instruction would be the language of that State; and if it is a multi-linguistic region it would be the language of the region in which the institution is situate).

If this promise is to be implemented, the third item mentioned above would have to be taken to mean that as a matter of fact instruction through Indian languages will have to be commenced in the first year college classes by at least June 1949, and every year an upper class would have to be added to it. And if I am right in thinking so, I suggest that it would help the process of transition and be a boon to the students if the examinees are allowed even by now to answer their question papers in the regional or State language of the university even if they have read or have been instructed through English. In the earlier years, this language might take the form of an Anglo-Indian mixture but it would help to form in the mind of the student necessary grooves for thinking out the subject in his own Indian language. It is a habit which takes a long time to form, and requires to be inculcated. From this point of view it appears to me that the decision to continue English as also the medium of examination requires modification.

The second item in the resolution refers to the place of the federal language in the studies. If that language is to be a fully developed inter-provincial language of India capable of standing on a level with even English in course of time, it will be necessary to give it the same place of prominence in schools and colleges as has been hitherto given to English. It can be so done with less expenditure

of time and energy than English, because of its affinity to the various Indian languages. I do not look upon examination as a very desirable institution in its present form. But since it holds an important place in all regulated teaching, if the idea goes among the students that the study of the Federal Language may be safely neglected, that Language will always remain unsatisfactory and undeveloped. It is well known that when the University of Bombay gave Regional Language, Geography and Science a place of certification instead of examination, these subjects were found to have been neglected. Really, it would have been more appropriate to substitute the words "English Language" in place of "Federal or National Language of India" in item 2, and the opposite in item 3.

The fourth and the fifth items appear as necessary corollaries. The subject of the federal language and scripts has been discussed in the last issue under the caption, *National Language.*

On the whole, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Dr. Tarachand Committee deserve to be congratulated for the work they have done. I hope the various departments and professors of the various universities will work hard for making the resolutions a perfect success. Since the resolutions are the result of the combined efforts of all universities and Governments, this policy will, I believe, be regarded as accepted by and binding on all universities, and I hope there will be no attempt to escape from it.

Bombay, 14-5-'48 K. G. MASHRUWALA

## CONFERENCE OF CONSTRUCTIVE INSTITUTIONS

Pursuant to the resolution passed at the Constructive Workers' Conference held at Sevagram in the middle of March, 1948 recommending that "the present existing constructive institutions do send up proposals to establish a federating body to foster mutual understanding and efficiency in work", Shri J. C. Kumarappa, who was entrusted with the work of taking necessary steps in this regard, convened a Conference of the representatives of various constructive institutions at Bombay on 27th April, 1948. Representatives of the following eleven institutions attended the Conference: Charkha Sangh (A. I. S. A.), Hindustani Talimi Sangh, Goseva Sangh, Gramodyog Sangh (A. I. V. I. A.), Harijan Sevak Sangh, Hindustani Prachar Sabha, Kasturba Gandhi Memorial Trust, Navajivan Trust, Nature Cure Trust, Western India Adivasi Workers' Federation, Hindustani Mazdoor Sangh and some special invitees. Shri Kakasaheb Kalelkar presided. Various suggestions received in this behalf were considered and after detailed discussions the Conference passed the following resolutions:

1. That all the eleven institutions represented here should federate into a general body called "Akhil Bharat Sarva Seva Sangh" by the federating units sending one representative each. These eleven should then add to their number at their first meeting four others imbued with Gandhian ideals. These fifteen should be the executive body exercising their powers to the following ends:

(a) Guiding the various component parts in regard to their general policy,

(b) Co-ordinating their activities, and

(c) Supervizing them.

Other items common to all the Sanghs like publicity and training of workers may be added to the above, provided the component parts so desire.

2. This Sarva Seva Sangh may start and maintain local centres with the help of the component parts or other institutions serving the local public through all the items of constructive work.

(*Note*: This Sarva Seva Sangh is thus not merely a deliberative or advisory body, but an active executive body directly serving the masses without impinging upon the autonomy of the component parts.)

3. This meeting recommends that the eleven institutions do elect in terms of the above resolution one representative each, and requests Sri Kumarappa to obtain from those institutions what should be the simplest pledge to be prescribed for the membership of Sarva Seva Sangh and the component parts. These items together with the one suggested by the Charkha Sangh and the pledge drafted by Sri Kumarappa should be circulated amongst all the federating units.

The Sarva Seva Sangh will elect its own convenor, the chairman being elected separately for each meeting and it is empowered to frame its own constitution rules and regulations.

It is suggested that the election of the representatives of the federating units will be expedited and the Sarva Seva Sangh be formally inaugurated before the end of July next.

7-5-'48 J. C. KUMARAPPA

## COUPLET WHICH BAPU RECITED

Some correspondents have desired to know the words of the couplet which Bapu was reported to have recited in his conversation with Shri Manubehn Gandhi just before retiring to bed on the night of 29th January, 1948. On enquiry I am informed by her that after taking some exercise Bapu laid himself down on his bed on the night of the 29th January, and she began to give him a little massage. Bapu said that he was feeling very much disturbed that day, but he must find his peace in the midst of disturbance. For the rest of it, it was all a four-days' show. Saying so he recited the following couplet:

"*Hae bahare bagh duniya chand roz;*
*Dekh lo iska tamasha chand roz*"

(The spring of the garden of the world lasts for a few days;

Have a look at its show for a few days.)

The song is given in full in *Ashram Bhajanavali*, published by the Navajivan Press.

Bombay, 10-5-'48 K. G. MASHRUWALA

(*Translated from Gujarati*)

## UNEXPLORED STATES OF CHHATTISGARH IN C.P.

I was very happy to have toured in some of the newly merged States of Chhattisgarh at the instance of the C. P. Premier, Shri Ravishankar Shukla and the Minister-in-charge of Aboriginal Welfare, Dr. W. S. Barlinge in the company of my friend and colleague Shri P. G. Vanikar, who is in charge of the Backward Area Welfare Department in the C. P. I toured in the areas formerly comprised by the States of Jaspur, Udaipur, Raigarh, Bastar and Kankar and also the towns of Raigarh and Raipur. The cause of my happiness was that these States were upto now to me a sealed book. I could not visit any of them before, in spite of my attachment to the predominently large tribal population except for a hasty tour in Bastar State in 1938. These regions are unexplored by the commoner of our public workers, I mean M.L.A.s and social workers, who would hardly care to go where any outsider is a suspect and followed by the C.I.D. policeman though in plain clothes. Now that these States have merged themselves in the Province, they are open to every one, and their tribal representatives will go to the Nagpur and Delhi Legislative Assemblies next year under adult franchise and joint electorates.

### OUTSTILL SYSTEM

The prevalent system of liquor consumption in all these five and similar other States is, as a rule, by outstill or village distilleries. The licit liquor supplied to the consumer here is not supplied from a central distillery but from a large number of small village distilleries called outstills and situated in a large number of central villages. Thus Bastar has got 363 outstills, Jaspur 40 and Raigarh 76. The ratio comes to one outstill for about seven to nine villages in the different States. Thus all the villages are very liberally provided with outstills and liquor is within easy reach of all villages large or small. The villages in the States may not be equally well-provided with wells for drinking water or with primary schools for their children, but there is no miserliness in providing them with licit liquor. Besides liquor supplied by the State, all the tribal people have got the liberty of brewing *handia* or *kusna* at home on certain occasions for their social functions with or without a permit and with or without payment. *Mahua* flower is plentiful and in the weekly market at Gharghoda in the Udaipur State, the sale of *mahua* flowers as seen by me was practically the only business done in that market, in this season.

Ranchi district and other districts in Chhota Nagpur were systematically over-run by these outstills for the past 17 or 18 years to the great economic and moral degradation of their tribal people. Fortunately, it has now been abolished there since 1st March, 1947. When will this cursed and man-devised satanic system of outstills be abolished from these States?

### PRIMARY SCHOOLS

All these States have taken it for granted that their duty is to provide the minimum of education for their population. Their argument is that the tribal population does not desire literacy, they cannot spare their children from tending their cattle and their agriculture and that even if schools are opened for them, they would not attend them, unless under compulsion which is not desirable. The result is that there are in some States one to four literates in every hundred males as against an all-India average of 14 or more, and as low an average of 0.5 literate women as against an all-India average of 5 per hundred. I was able to see two State schools in Jaspur State, one big and one small with 3 and 2 teachers respectively. The buildings of these schools were tumbling down, rickety, dark and quite unfit for tender school children. In Bastar State one lower primary school is provided for every 48 villages and the grand total of 57 lower primary schools is considered adequate for a population of 6,33,000. In 1910 there was a rebellion by the tribal people fomented by a relative of the then Raja, resulting in the burning down of a number of school houses by the mob and in harassing and driving away the teachers. Thereafter the State under the direction of the political department made it a policy that no more schools were to be opened thereafter, lest the susceptibility of the people be offended thereby. It is now high time that this policy of "no more schools" after 1910 be reversed in the year 1948 by the C. P. Government which has taken charge of the Bastar State. The Bastar policy of "no more schools" applies to almost all the 14 States of Chhattisgarh now merged in C. P.

### SOCIAL EDUCATION

The C. P. Government is now carrying on a regular campaign of what is generally called adult education, but termed "social education" by the C. P. Government lasting for 5 to 6 weeks from 1st of May, 1948. The experiment is being conducted in 500 centres by all the ministers, high and low educational officers, all deputy commissioners going round their beats and starting such centres personally to make a regular drive. They have got the help of 10 to 12 thousand volunteers for this purpose including pupil-teachers just passed out from all Normal Schools and colleges. I would have wished that the period of training had been extended to at least three months. But something is better than nothing, and I hope that the present campaign will be followed up by another of longer duration. I took a little part in this campaign at Jagdalpur in Bastar State and in 7 village schools on the road side from Jagdalpur to Kankar by getting new tribal girl pupils admitted in those seven schools on payment of small monthly stipends.

### KONI INSTITUTE

I had the happiness of visiting this institute which is situate three miles from Bilaspur and run by the Labour Department of the Government of India for ex-service military men. This is a very well equipped institution for teaching over more than 50 technical vocational subjects. It is very well equipped and staffed. But the number of pupils (about 250) is much less than there is actual accommodation for. It is hoped that this will be opened out to civilians of the Province and probably to the Sindhi refugees, thousands of whom are accommodated in the refugee camps in the Central Provinces. I may here mention some of the trades

taught here. (1) Turning work, (2) Machinist, (3) Carpentry, (4) Blacksmithy, (5) Concrete work, (6) Surveying, (7) Painting and decorating, (8) Brick-laying, (9) Electrical work, (10) Motor mechanics, (11) Cabinet-making, (12) Soap making, (13) Clay modelling, (14) Fruit canning and preserving, (15) Ink manufacture, (16) Tailoring, (17) *Dari* weaving, (18) *Gota* or lace weaving, (19) Silk weaving, (20) Cotton weaving, (21) Basket and cane work, (22) Shoe-making, (23) Saddlery, (24) Calico printing, (25) Dyeing, (26) Metal work, etc.

### Bastar State

This is a very large State extending over 13,000 square miles and over, with a population of 6,33,000. Thus the population is very sparse. 73.5 per cent of the total population is tribal. The hilly part of the State called Abujmar is peopled by the Maria section of the Gonds and to this day remains unvisited by travellers on account of its inaccessibility, there being no roads to go up the hill plateau on which these Marias live. None of the roads in the State have bridges over the *nallas* and rivers in the rainy season, except the road from Kankar to Jagdalpur and Jagdalpur to Gidam, a distance of 96 miles plus 46 miles. Even the officers of the State cannot move about freely for 4 to 6 months in the year for want of bridges and culverts. The river Indrawati flows from East to West throughout the State for a distance of over 130 miles and joins the Godavari at its west end. This region provides good material for study for anthropologists and also social service workers.

### R. C. Mission, Jaspur

I cannot refrain from giving a few details about this Mission as known to me. I visited two of its important stations, out of five, in Jaspur State, namely, the headquarters of Gholang and the other at Gheenabahar and studied them closely. The Jesuit Fathers of Ranchi district came over here over thirty years ago and carried on their work of proselytizing the tribal people through the agency of their loan banks, schools, dispensaries, and their preacher teachers and nuns. They have since gone even further than that by defying the rules made for them by the Political Agent of Chhattisgarh States, even so late as those made in 1943. They have opened a very large number of lower primary schools, as many as 68, though expressly asked not to open them without the consent of the State. These schools are evidently schools for the converted or those who are intended to be converted through their preachers and loan banks. I quote below the condition that was made with the Mission by the Political Agent. "The Mission should not open any new feeder school (to the 37 schools recognized) or classes under the trees or in chapels or other buildings in the State without permission."

Though it was enjoined that "religious instruction is given only to those who desire it," in fact it has been given to everyone and included in the school time-table openly and defiantly.

Though expressly laid down in the July, 1943 order that "the State is not required to give any grant-in-aid", the Father in charge of the Gholang Mission asked for grant-in-aid and a group of his teachers, though they were not State servants, asked for dearness allowance. They complained about this even to an outsider like myself, as if it was a due payable to the Mission and the teachers by the C. P. Government. When this complaint was made to me, I was led to believe for a time that the C. P. Government with which the State was recently merged was acting unfairly with the Mission. But when I learnt the conditions made with the Mission by the Political Agent in 1943, I could not help thinking that the Mission itself was acting unfairly with the new Government merely because it was new to the situation.

Converted Oraons of Jaspur State are no better than rice Christians of China. They are converted merely for the sake of their belly and nothing else, and that too is done by the aid of small agricultural loans given to unwary, simple folk of the jungle in the State. Here they are already depressed and live in a state of fear and depression. Such conversion to another faith has no real value in religion.

### Housing of Sweepers

Before I conclude, I must say a few words about sweepers in Raipur. Ten years ago, i. e. in 1938 I had spotted this problem in the town of Raipur, a large town now grown still larger after the second world war. But the housing provided by the Municipality of Raipur has remained in the same disgraceful condition in which it was ten years ago. The Municipality has passed through many vicissitudes in Raipur. The Hon'ble the Premier of C. P. hails from this town. I was much pained to hear the wailing and groaning of men and women and children of sweepers about their housing conditions especially of the colony near Lendi Tank. Rooms in the colony and the streets are overflooded in the rainy season. The rooms are dark, ill-ventilated and leaky in one word U. H. H. (unfit for human habitation). I had to write strongly in the Nagpur Press about this sweepers' colony. I hope it will draw the attention of the C. P. Government and the Minister-in-charge of Local Self-Government.

Wardha, 4-5-'48 A. V. Thakkar

SELECTIONS FROM GANDHI

By *Nirmal Kumar Bose*

With a Foreword by Gandhiji

Price *Rs. 4-0-0* Postage etc. *0-10-0*

DELHI DIARY

[ Prayer Speeches from 10-9-'47 to 30-1-'48 ]

As the explanation of the title indicates in this Diary are collected the prayer speeches delivered by Gandhiji to his prayer audiences during his last stay in Delhi.

With a foreword by Babu Rajendraprasad

Price *Rupees Three* Postage etc. *Annas Ten*

Navajivan Publishing House

Post Box 105, Ahmedabad

## VINOBA AT RAJGHAT—IV

The following is a summary of the sermon given by Shri vinoba at Rajghat on 23-4-'48 in the presence of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and others.

He said that he wanted to draw the attention of the audience on the miserable condition of the refugees. When there was pain in one of the limbs of the body, even though all the other parts were quite healthy, a person's attention would again and again get rivetted on the painful limb. Society, he said, should be like a living body. The part which was in pain should attract the attention of all the other parts of the society. But he regretted to observe that that was not so with them. In that hot season people were thrown into tents in plains where there was not a tree to be seen. Some tents were so small that it was impossible to get into them in a standing position. People did not get sufficient employment also. Their condition was miserable from every point of view. Government was trying to do what it could for them, but it was quite insufficient. It was necessary that every one should pay attention to this matter and every individual should try personally to serve these people in some way or another. They should go to their camps and see how they could help them. If they could find them employment, that was one way. If there was room in their homes, they could select some and invite them to live with them. They could adopt an orphan and bring it up in their family. In this way every individual should try to do something.

Shri Vinoba illustrated his point. He said that when they threw a bucket into a well and drew out water, they would not find a pit forming at the place from which the water was taken. This was so, because the surrounding water immediately went to the place from which the bucket was drawn and filled up the pit. If there was loss, it consisted in the level of the whole reservoir getting lower, but it did not leave a solitary spot to be an empty pit. It was not so when they took out, say, a bucketful of grain from a heap of *juar* (millet). A few *mahatma* (large-hearted) grains would run up to fill up the pit partially, but the rest would keep to their place, with the result that the heap would show a pit at that place. A good society should be like water in a well. Every individual should run up to succour those in affliction. If they accepted his counsel, they would help Government and would be able to bring more relief to the people. It was necessary to help both the Government as well as refugees because it was a tremendous task and it was impossible for Government agency alone to deal with the situation without the aid of private agency.

Another consequence of popular aid would be that thereby they would be able to create public opinion. In a democracy public opinion gave impetus to the Government. It was both its strength and weakness. If public opinion was active and strong, Government also had to be active and strong. If it was dull, Government machinery moved slowly and in a dilatory fashion. It was necessary, therefore, that every individual should take interest in that work and help to arouse public opinion. If this was not done, the poison of ill feeling would pervade all over India and it would become extremely difficult to control it. It was necessary to be forewarned.

It was also necessary to render assistance to those Muslims, who had during the disturbances dispersed themselves in safe areas round about, but had not migrated to Pakistan. He did not consider at that moment the question of those who had gone away to Pakistan. But these other Muslims must be allowed to return to their homes as quickly as possible. If they were afraid of doing so, it was not creditable to the people. There was no bravery involved in that. Bravery consisted in not being afraid of anyone nor raising fear into another. A brave person might fight when it was his duty to do so. But he did not fight with a feeling of hatred. Hatred did not increase strength, but reduced it and also made the atmosphere weak. Hence it was wise, as a sage had said, that "a brave man should take non-hatred in both his hands." (अद्वेषो हस्तयोर्द्वे ।) We had to be fearless as well as non-inspirers of fear.

Some people looked to what Pakistan did in these matters before coming to a decision themselves. He would say that this was irrational and also foolish. If they made a habit of looking at the opposite party they entrusted themselves into its hands. They thus reduced themselves into the position of a monkey whom the tamer—the other party—could make to dance as he wished. It was very necessary that they did not lose their initiative in determining their policy, but do what was right irrespective of what the other party did. Otherwise they would become slaves quickly. If they gave protection to their own minorities, the other party would have to follow them and if it did not, it would be running a great risk. The teaching of the *Gita* was, "Perform your duty without worrying about its fruit." It was necessary to consider whether their act was proper, and if it was proper, not to worry about the consequences. They must always have faith that the ultimate result of right conduct would be right. If the people acted that way, they would always get the right path. Otherwise they would lose themselves in wilderness and fall into a vicious circle. That would ultimately give a third party control over their freedom. If they wanted to retain their freedom it was necessary to keep their minds cool and create a spirit of brotherhood amongst themselves. They must give up all suspicion. For suspicion gave rise to suspicion and faith gave rise to faith.

23-4-'48 D. D.

CONTENTS


| | | PAGE |
|---|---|---|
| RAJAJI | ... K. G. MASHRUWALA | 105 |
| VINOBA'S TOUR IN DELHI AND THE EAST PUNJAB | ... D. D. | 105 |
| TO SUBSCRIBERS OF THE 'INDIAN OPINION' | ... J. DESAI | 107 |
| MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION | K. G. MASHRUWALA | 108 |
| CONFERENCE OF CONSTRUCTIVE INSTITUTIONS | ... J. C. KUMARAPPA | 109 |
| COUPLET WHICH BAPU RECITED | ... K. G. MASHRUWALA | 109 |
| UNEXPLORED STATES OF CHHATTISGARH IN C.P. | ... A. V. THAKKAR | 110 |
| VINOBA AT RAJGHAT—IV | ... D. D. | 112 |


Printed and Published by Jivanji Dahyabhai Desai, Navajivan Press, Kalupur, Ahmedabad.
*Subscription Rates*—INLAND: One year, Rs. 6: Six months, Rs. 3: FOREIGN: One year, Rs. 8 or 14 sh. or. $ 3.